

birth, to mistake custom, which teaches servitude, for nature, which teaches freedom. Nature, unfortunately, loses her power the less she is cultivated. As a plant may be transformed by engrafting some foreign twig on its stem, so human nature may be entirely distorted by custom. Custom, then, is the first cause of this voluntary servitude, in which men seem to live so naturally. Happily, there are exceptions even to the power of custom. Such exceptions are the men "who, possessed of strong intelligence and insight, are not content, like the great mass, to regard what is before their eyes, but look beyond and behind them, studying the past in order to measure the present and gauge the future." To such, slavery is not natural and its taste never sweet, however artfully it may be gilded. Education and freedom of thought are the enemies of tyrants. It is the interest of the tyrant to enervate the people rather than enlighten them, and it is the tendency of the subjects of a tyrant to lose all the masculine virtues of natural freedom. Long live the king, cry the people, in return for the spectacles, free dinners, and largesses of the tyrant. They bless Tiberius and Nero for their liberality, and forget that they are being bribed with their own substance, and will be called on to-morrow to surrender their property in order to satisfy the avarice, their children to gratify the passions, of these magnanimous emperors. Credulity grows with effeminacy, and the tyranny of kings is invested with the miraculous by the ignorance of the mass. The people themselves help to give currency to the lies they believe, for the profit of the monarch. Moreover, the tyrant finds ready adjuncts in the passions, the avarice, the egotism of many of his subjects, who find their advantage in his service and their own slavery.

From all which, it is evident that this ardent youth, who pours forth the outraged feelings of a high and generous spirit, gives expression to what many sage men have uttered in less feverish language, and what every independent soul, not enslaved by convention, feels in the presence of the arrogance of individual power. It is refreshing reading even now, when the arrogance if not the tyranny of individual power is not altogether unknown in high places at times ; and there must have been many in that crushed, bleeding Bordeaux to whom